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## **Sen. Stamas issues statement on welfare reform**

**LANSING** – Sen. Tony Stamas, R-Midland, issued the following statement on the passage of the welfare reform act:

“I’m glad to see the welfare package pass the Legislature. These measures will help make individual welfare recipients more self-sufficient and that is the ultimate goal – to help people stand on their own two feet. This package will give individuals the help they need while they work toward being independent.

“The legislation in this package also improves the system, allowing Michigan to meet federal work requirements and avoid millions of dollars in penalties.”

*Note:*

The welfare reform package will:

- Provide better assessment of individuals;
- Require a family self-sufficiency plan to help guide families on the pathway to a better life;
- Impose sanctions for those who do not adhere to their plan; and
- Create a 48-month lifetime limit for cash assistance.

The package also:

- Provides exemptions for those who are mentally, emotionally or physically disabled;
- Includes a provision that will encourage recipients to increase their hours and seek higher paying jobs by allowing them to keep more of the money they earn;
- Stops the 48-month clock for those who are working and adhering to their family self-sufficiency plan; and
- Provides the ability for the director of the Department of Human Services to exempt those who have extenuating circumstances and can’t meet their goals.

The bills in the package are Senate Bills 1500 and 1501 and House Bills 6580 and 6587.

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Editor’s note: Audio of Sen. Stamas is available on the Senate Majority Audiowire at:  
<http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/audiowire/stamas/index.htm>